

The MISSION Of The CHURCH Is MISSIONS

A THRILLING STORY — A STIRRING CHALLENGE

by Rev. B. C. Cochrane

I heard the story myself. I was within an hour's driving distance of the setting. So I will tell you of what I heard and how I felt.

It was in late October of last year. I had just completed a twelve-hundred mile flight from Moncton, N. B., to Marion, Indiana. Rev. Jimmy Lentz guided the World Gospel Mission's Mooney Mark 20 plane to a smooth landing on the runway of the Marion airport, bringing our wonderful flight to an end. Jimmy, Mrs. Lentz and I, were welcomed by a young couple of the headquarters staff of W. G. M. And these young people had a story to tell, a story that thrilled them, a story that challenged us. As we drove from the airport toward the city of Marion, they told it together. When one paused for a breath, the other took up the story. They were excited and enthused about what they had seen and heard, and as we listened we imbibed the spirit that possessed them. The tale they told was of remarkable achievement in missionary effort at the local church level. To appreciate the impact of what they had felt in the missionary convention from which they had come, I had to learn a bit of history, and the lesson was given gladly!

About six years ago (now about seven) a new church was organized in Terra Haute, Indiana. It was named the "World Gospel Church". It was launched by a man who had a great vision—a vision of a church which would begin and function under the conviction that the prime responsibility of born-again believers is to organize and work for the promotion of a world missionary programme. There were but fifteen members at the beginning, and there was no church building. The first meeting was a missionary meeting, and the first offering a missionary offering. Decision was made by the little group that their first concern would not be for themselves and their local needs, but for the unenlightened and unevangelized and the Christian's obligation to send the Gospel to them. They launched out in the belief that if they would put these people and their needs first, the Lord would see to it that local needs were met. It was a new test for the principle of Matthew 6:33.

From the beginning, this church began to move forward in a remarkable way. A large, new building was erected. Membership increased rapidly. Interest grew by leaps and bounds. Above all, missionary giving sky-rocketed. Increasing each year, the total missionary giving for 1962-63 passed \$30,000. The challenge of the 1963 Convention was to aim higher, but the new level to be reached was to exceed even the pastor's vision and faith, for the people had just pledged to raise \$48,000 for missions in the 1963-64 church year!

This was the story that thrilled these young people and us. It was the story that stirred us with a new challenge. If one church could do this, why not another? If God would bless a vision like this for one pastor and congregation, would He not bless any other pastor and people who would dare to venture with a similar emphasis? What do you think?

ALCOHOLISM'S COST

Every Canadian worker labors for three weeks in each year to pay the national cost of alcoholic indulgence. Alcoholism is a high price national luxury costing us about six per cent of our Gross National Product, and affecting one in every thirty adult Canadians.

The King's Highway

O ZION HASTE!

by Rev. B. C. Cochrane

"The sands of time are sinking". Time is running out for the Church in respect to its evangelistic and missionary ministry. The doors of opportunity have already closed in some areas of the world, and others are even now swinging shut. The Day of Grace has "run unto the eventide".

Africa, the country of our calling, is seething with unrest. Algeria, the Congo Republic, Tanganyika, Kenya, Zanzibar, and other countries of this great Continent, have suffered the pangs and throes of revolutionary conflicts. In some areas missionaries have been slain, in others they have been withdrawn. The rising spirit of nationalism challenges the rights and rule of any individual or organization that belongs to a "foreign" country. The whole programme of Christian missions has been misrepresented as an agency designed to further the material and political interests of the countries from which the white missionaries have come.

The "dark Continent" is a land of unrest. Explosive situations are prevalent and sputtering fuses burn slowly but steadily toward the point of detonation. The aftermath of the threatening explosions will be, as it has been in other countries, the end of missionary work, as we know it. How soon such developments may come to crisis in the countries where our missionaries serve and our work is carried on, we cannot know. But we would be blindly optimistic to deny the possibility of such developments at any time. In fact, missionaries most recently returned to the field from furlough, write of a distinct and radical change in the atmosphere of the country during the period of their fifteen-months absence. Signs of nationalistic and reactionary unrest have appeared even among the students of schools under our supervision, and strong disciplinary measures have been taken to emphasize the intention of our Mission to maintain order and respect in relation to the country's government. This situation is entirely new to our missionary administration and is indicative of the trend that is moving like a tidal wave from country to country.

"I must work the works of Him that sent me while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work", is a watchword for all labourers in the Lord's Vineyard. The sun is declining, the shadows are lengthening. The Day of Salvation has all but run its course. We must add a word to the oft-repeated missionary call "come over into Macedonia and help us"—it is the word "quickly". "Come", they say, as they have been saying for centuries, "but come quickly". "If you do not come, we will not hear; if we do not hear, we will not believe; if we do not believe, we will not be saved. Come then, please come, or send someone to bear the good tidings of Salvation, But you must hasten your coming; or it will be eternally too late!"

CONFERENCE

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we are grateful to the Lord for the opportunity and privilege of meeting together in this way, praying and singing in our own language, and sharing the burdens of the Work.

It is tentatively planned to have future Conferences in Vryheid in conjunction with our European Church Work, hoping that the one will be a help to the other, since we would have a Church Building for the Services and more accommodation for entertaining missionaries.

—Rev. K. E. Gorman